



Additional Implements of Husbandry Town Hall

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Editors: DATCP is distributing this on behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

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Town Hall Meeting in Belmont being included to review impacts of agricultural equipment on roads

The size and weight of agricultural equipment and the potential impact it has on public roads is the subject of a series of town hall meetings being held throughout the state. Due to strong interest in the topic, an additional meeting will be held on September 4 in Belmont (five miles northeast of Platteville).

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) are urging the agricultural community, local highway officials and others to attend the meetings. Sessions will provide detailed information on the recommendations of a special study group that reviewed size and weight limits and other issues related to agricultural equipment, also known as implements of husbandry (IoH).

Agricultural equipment is getting larger and heavier which helps in more efficient farm production, but it can also impact pavement and road structures. WisDOT, in partnership with DATCP, convened the IoH Study Group, involving over 20 stakeholders representing various transportation and farm organizations, equipment manufacturers, law enforcement, local officials and the University of Wisconsin-Madison/Extension.

Two of the more challenging issues for the study group were establishing maximum size and gross vehicle and axle weight limits. Some of the group's recommendations include:

- Maximum width of IoH equipment of 15 feet. Equipment up to 17 feet wide may be operated without written authorization when they meet safety requirements to ensure safe passage by other road users.
- Maximum width of IoH commercial motor vehicles of 10 feet.
- Maximum height of 13 feet 6 inches. Equipment greater than this height may be operated without written authorization. The operator is responsible for ensuring there are no conflicts with overhead obstructions such as wires or structures.
- Maximum length of 60 feet for single IoH equipment; 100 feet for combinations of two IoH; and 70 feet for a combination of three IoH.

- Expanding the weight allowance for IoH up to 15 percent over the limits established by the Federal Bridge Formula, except where posted or during spring thaw.

Safety, the capacity of roads and bridges and consideration of commonly used IOH equipment guided the recommendations for size. Road width, overhead wires, bridge standards and the ability to safely maneuver through turns determined the new size parameters. The recommendation on weight allowance is based on engineering analysis and research on the damage done to roads as a result of increased weight.

The town hall meetings offer a chance to ask questions and provide feedback on the proposed size and weight limits. In addition, the meetings will share other recommendations such as new definitions for IoH, operator requirements for vehicles that exceed base definitions and best practices such as pipelines, nurse trucks and one-way roads.

Upcoming meetings, co-hosted by the University of Wisconsin Extension, will take place from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on the dates and locations listed below (**** See additional meeting in Belmont, off Hwy 151, five miles northeast of Platteville***):

- September 3 – Chippewa County Courthouse Large Assembly Room, 711 North Bridge Street, Chippewa Falls
- **September 4 – Belmont Conference Center, 102 W. Mound View Ave., Belmont.**

The meeting on September 4 will be the final IoH Town Hall meeting.

If you are unable to attend one of the meetings and would like more information or to comment, contact Rory Rhinesmith, Deputy Administrator, Division of Transportation System Development at (608) 267-7111. Written comments regarding the project can be mailed to Mr. Rhinesmith, WisDOT, 4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 451, PO Box 7910, Madison, WI 53707-7910. The meeting sites are accessible to wheelchairs. Citizens who are deaf or hard of hearing and require an interpreter should call at least three working days prior to the meeting.

The complete IoH Study Group report is at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/business/ag/index.htm>. Also, an online feedback survey is available until September 8. Check the web site for details.

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